

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 767

By Bone

A RESOLUTION to honor the members of Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 upon the celebration of their 100th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should recognize those organizations that have reached a milestone in their illustrious history; and

WHEREAS, the Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 Free and Accepted Masons is one such organization that has attained its 100th year of public service; and

WHEREAS, an anniversary of this magnitude gives Lodge members a chance to celebrate their long and distinguished history of charity and community service, reflect back with respect and reverence on the work, struggles, and accomplishments of those who have gone before them, and look toward the future with strength, confidence, and pride; and

WHEREAS, in 1906, twenty Masons living in or near Mt. Juliet petitioned the Grand Lodge of Tennessee for permission to form a Masonic Lodge in Mt. Juliet; the Lodge operated under dispensation from the Grand Lodge during 1907, before receiving its charter on January 31, 1908; and

WHEREAS, Lee Baker was selected as the first Worshipful Master, a position in which he served in 1908, 1909, and 1910; J. Morgan Hurt was Senior Warden and W.B. Sullivan was Junior Warden; and

WHEREAS, with meeting times officially set to the second and fourth Saturday of each month, the Lodge started with eleven charter members, admitted one, initiated four, passed five, and raised four; by the end of 1907, it boasted sixteen Master Masons; and

WHEREAS, the first person initiated into the Lodge was Garfield Boyd on May 11, 1907; he was passed to the degree of Fellow Craft on June 8, 1907, and raised to the degree of Master Mason on July 13, 1907; and

WHEREAS, Garfield Boyd succeeded Brother Baker as Worshipful Master in 1911, and continued in that position until 1914; he again served as Worshipful Mater in 1917; and

WHEREAS, the Lodge continued a steady growth in membership and reached fifty in 1919; membership ebbed and flowed throughout the 1920s and 1930s, mirroring the country's struggling economy during the Depression years; and

WHEREAS, with a perseverance and loyalty widely exhibited in Masonic circles, membership reached a high of fifty in 1930, and again in 1944; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 1916, a constitutional number of petitioners met in the Hall of the Mt. Juliet Lodge to form Order of the Eastern Star Chapter #181; and

WHEREAS, a number of distinguished citizens have served the Chapter throughout its history, including Thomas Harvey Freeman, for whom the Eastern Star was named; a prominent, life-long resident of Mt. Juliet, Mr. Freeman was an officer in the Confederate Army, founder of the Bank of Mt. Juliet, a state representative from Wilson County, and, later, a Senator representing Wilson and Smith counties; and

WHEREAS, in 1869, Thomas Freeman was made Master Mason in the first Masonic Lodge of Mt. Juliet – Lodge #379, which held its charter from 1868 to 1884; Mr. Freeman eventually became a charter member of Mt. Juliet Lodge # 642; and

WHEREAS, the Order of the Eastern Star met in a room on the second floor of the old Mt. Juliet School; the school is also where Mt. Juliet Lodge #642 may have first met; and

WHEREAS, the two organizations eventually relocated to the second floor above the John Hamblen store in 1926, which was located in the northwest corner of Division Street and Mt. Juliet Rd.; the store later became the Mt. Juliet Post Office; and

WHEREAS, a fire on February 15, 1942, burned the store and destroyed all Lodge records; Lodge members rented space above the Bank of Mt. Juliet, and their first recorded meeting of the Lodge after the fire was on May 4, 1942; and

WHEREAS, the benevolent tradition of Mt. Juliet Lodge #642 was established in its early years; and

WHEREAS, during WWII, the Lodge remitted the dues of all Brothers who were in the military, and made regular donations to the American Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, in June of 1946, the Lodge assumed the \$115.00 hospital bill of Brother Louis Jackson; it also paid for five CARE packages at a cost of \$50.00 to be sent to Europe to help relieve the suffering in Post-War Europe, with a request that the CARE packages be given to Brother Masons or their families if possible; and

WHEREAS, the first recorded salary for Lodge officers occurred in 1950, when the Lodge voted to pay the secretary an annual salary of \$12.00 and free dues, as well as providing for free dues for the Tiler; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, the Lodge borrowed \$10,000 from the Bank of Mt. Juliet and bought the old Green Hill Baptist Church on Tate Lane, with its sloping floor, for \$19,000; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, Mt. Juliet Lodge membership reached two hundred; Lodge members continued to renovate their Hall, adding central heat and air conditioning, expanding the kitchen, and updating fixtures; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, several Lodge members started meeting at the Lodge on Wednesday mornings to have breakfast and socialize; the gathering rapidly grew in size and importance, and donations from the weekly meal have more than doubled the Lodge's charitable work and increased their visibility in the community; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Lodge had its sloping floor leveled and new carpet installed and, consequently, lost the distinction of "being the Lodge that ran downhill to the East and uphill to the West"; the Lodge also replaced its old theater type seats, which Lodge members had taken with them from the old Lodge above Mt. Juliet Bank in 1967; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, the Lodge established an Endowment Fund with a gift of \$5,000.00 from a non-Mason who wanted to support the good works of the Lodge; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Grand Lodge reduced the age for becoming a Mason from twenty-one to eighteen; on September 11, 2007, Jonathon Scott Nicholson was initiated an

Entered Apprentice Mason thus becoming the first eighteen-year-old Mason in the Mt. Juliet Lodge; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Mt. Juliet Lodge grew to a remarkable three hundred members, while many other Masonic Bodies were losing members; and

WHEREAS, since its founding, the Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 has been known for its numerous and significant contributions to the community; and

WHEREAS, the membership of Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 takes great pride in being an integral part of the community, and represents a wide spectrum of the citizens of Wilson County; and

WHEREAS, it is for the noble efforts of the Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 of Wilson County for the last 100 years that this legislative body is most thankful; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate the members and officers of Mt. Juliet Masonic Lodge #642 for one hundred years of meritorious service to their community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.